

CRC QUERI AFFILIATES FORUM

Research Seminar Features Dr. Lynn Soban

Lynn Soban, PhD will be our featured QUERI research seminar speaker on Tuesday, August 23, 2005 at 2:00 – 3:30 PM EDT. Dr. Soban will present “The Effect of Area HMO Market Share on Colorectal Cancer Screening Within the VA Health Care System”.

Although the level of managed care market share has been shown to influence the structure and functioning of other health care systems, no studies have examined whether performance with VA health care facilities is influenced by the local HMO market share. Dr. Soban's cross-sectional study uses data from: Interview, Area Resource File, the VA External Peer Review Program, and the 1999 VA Survey of Primary Care Practices. Patient-level analysis, using generalized estimating equations, examines the effect of managed care market share on receipt of colorectal cancer screening.

Dr. Soban is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for the Study of Healthcare Provider Behavior, VA Greater Los Angeles HSR&D Center of Excellence, Sepul-

velda, VA Ambulatory Care Center & Nursing Home. She obtained her Ph.D. in Health Services at UCLA's School of Public Health in 2005. Her research interests involve organizational predictors of health care quality, organizational change processes, and research translation. Dr. Soban's current research projects involve: identifying the organizational influence on quality; and organizational changes related to improving inpatient nursing care and patient outcomes.



Researchers Needed: *Development of a Simulation Model*

CRC QUERI is interested in developing a simulation model to address endoscopic capacity within the VA. We are interested in capturing the effects of: demand for all GI services; primary care utilization and CRC screening rates; screening modality; surveillance and diagnostic colonoscopy demand; resources such as provider and staff FTE, procedure, recovery room and other material resources; and patient adherence and prep.

The goals are to estimate the clinical FTE and material resources necessary to address current and expected demand for endoscopy services and to estimate the potential effectiveness of interventions designed to maximize capacity utilization. A limited amount of start-up funding is available.

The CRC QUERI research coordinating center will work with interested researchers to procure more substantial funding. If you are interested, or if you know any researchers who may be interested, please contact Laura Kochevar, Research Coordinator, at (612) 467-5355 or Laura.Kochevar@med.va.gov.

Affiliates Forum

is a quarterly publication of the CRC QUERI

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Get to Know Our Affiliates *Thomas Imperiale, MD*

"Quantifying Risk to Target Screening Colonoscopy" is a 5-year study sponsored by NIH, Eli Lilly, and Marathon Oil that is being conducted by QUERI affiliate Tom Imperiale, MD. Dr. Imperiale is a professor of medicine at Indiana University School of Medicine and is also associated with the Roudebush VAMC HSR&D where he is an adjunct faculty member.

Dr. Imperiale's project aims to identify risk factors that predict the occurrence of colorectal cancer and advanced precancerous polyps so that colorectal cancer screening recommendations can be tailored according to the needs of individual patients. Primary care doctors, according to Dr. Imperiale, want to know what to do for a particular patient, and find the many screening options available to be "cumbersome."



Toward the goal of identifying risk factors, the study, which began in August 2004, will establish a clinical/specimen repository from 2,000 to 2,500 individuals who are employees, retirees, or their dependents of Eli Lilly or Marathon Oil and who have undergone colonoscopies offered to them by those companies. The repository will include data/specimens collected from persons with normal screens to individuals whose screens indicated small polyps to patients who were found to have advanced cancer. Dr. Imperiale will apply for funding to analyze the specimens.

Dr. Imperiale will analyze epidemiological data from 4,000 to 5,000 persons including information about lifestyle factors, personal medical history, extensive family history, BMI, and body weight. Hopefully, data analysis will result in a system that stratifies the risk for colorectal cancer and advanced pre-cancerous polyps, delineating "high risk" and "low-risk" subgroups. It's hoped that the study will result in the development of an algorithm or a prediction rule to answer the following:

- Who needs to be screened?
- When should screening be utilized?
- What type of screening is most appropriate for the individual?

Currently, Dr. Imperiale is mentoring Charles Kahi, MD in a VA multi-site project that examines the yield and outcomes of colonoscopy in elderly patients. The goal of the project is to identify conditions under which re-screening or surveillance colonoscopy would be unnecessary for elderly persons. In other words, the study aims to discover under what conditions elderly patients should be brought back for colonoscopies as well as subgroups of patients that should not undergo colonoscopies.

In the future, Dr. Imperiale hopes to study how the process of colon preparation prior to endoscopic procedures can be tailored to the individual patient. He feels that the current "one size fits all" cleansing procedure has a negative impact on patient satisfaction, patient adherence to endoscopic procedures, the patient's ability to properly prepare for the procedure, and resource utilization. Dr. Imperiale feels that the topic of preparation for colonoscopy has been overlooked by clinicians and researchers interested in digestive diseases.

New Online Journal to be Launched

Focuses on Implementation of Evidence-Based Clinical Practice

The VA Health Services Research and Development Service and the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, UK are launching a new on-line open-access journal focusing on the study of methods to accelerate the implementation of evidence-based clinical practices in routine healthcare settings. "Healthcare Quality Improvement and Implementation Science," is to be published by BioMed Central. Current plans call for HSR&D's CIDER (Center for Information Dissemination and Education Resources) to host the journal's editorial office.

This journal will fill an important need that is close to the heart of QUERI: getting detailed implementation evidence out to users as soon as possible. The journal will include research reports, methodological and conceptual pieces and detailed case studies of implementation efforts. Both successes and "failures" are welcomed. Is anything a "failure" when we learn from it? We think not!

We encourage all QUERI affiliates to consider submitting articles for peer review, or being available as a reviewer. Ideal papers would be built around implementation lessons and details that you know are important, but never quite fit in traditional journals. For more information, see http://www.hsrdr.research.va.gov/for_researchers/journal-information.cfm.

Remember: This is your forum!

Want to know who else is doing research in your area? Looking for co-investigators? Want to debate an issue? Post a QUERI query in the Forum. Call or email Administrative Officer, Suzanne Leger at (612) 467-2785 Suzanne.Leger2@med.va.gov.

Recent Affiliate Publications



Several QUERI affiliates have had articles published recently in a variety of journals. To keep you abreast of the wide reach of our affiliates' work, we list them here. Affiliates' first and last names appear in *italic*.

Diana Burgess (In press). What motivates employees to transfer knowledge outside their work unit? *Journal of Business Communication*.

Diana Burgess, Michelle van Ryn & Fu, S. (2004). Making Sense of the Provider Role in Promoting Disparities. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 19, 1154-9.

Rudolph, R., Jason Dominitz, Lampe, J., Levy, L., Qu, P., Lampe, P., Bronner, M., Potter, J. (2005). Risk factors for colorectal cancer in relation to number and size of aberrant crypt foci in humans. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention*, 14(3):605-8.

McDonnell, W., Jason Dominitz. (2004). CT colonoscopy. *Gastroenterology*, Aug, 127(2):693. (Letter to the editor).

Deborah Fisher, Dougherty, K., Martin, C., Galanko, J., Dawn Provenzale. (2004). Race and colorectal cancer screening: A population-based study in North Carolina. *North Carolina Medical Journal*, 65, 12-15.

Deborah Fisher, Martin, C., Galanko, J., Sandler, R.S., Noble, M.D., Dawn Provenzale. (2004). Risk factors for advanced disease in colorectal cancer. *American Journal of Gastroenterology*, 99: 2019-2024.

Sultan, S., Deborah Fisher, Voils, C., Kinney A.Y., Sandler, R.S., Dawn Provenzale. (2004). The impact of functional support on health related quality of life in colon cancer patients. *Cancer*, 101:2737-2743.

Jason Dominitz, Boyko, E.J., Koepsell, T.D., Heagerty, P.J., Maynard, C., Sporleder, J.L., Thomas Imperiale. VA Cooperative Study Group 488. (2005). Elevated prevalence of hepatitis C in users of United States Veterans Medical Centers. *Hepatology*, 41:88-96.

LeBlanc, J.K., Ciaccia, D., Al-Assi, M.T., McGrath, K., Thomas Imperiale, Tao, L.C., Vallery, S., DeWitt, J., Sherman, S., Collins, E. (2004). Optimal number of EUS-guided fine needle passes needed to obtain a correct diagnosis. *Gastrointestinal Endoscopy*, 59:475-81.

Thomas Imperiale. Risk factors for advanced colorectal neoplasia: From evidence to application. Commentary on Lieberman, D.A., Prindiville, S., Weiss, D.G., Willett, W. for the VA Cooperative Study Group 380. Risk factors for advanced colonic neoplasia and hyperplastic polyps in asymptomatic individuals. *Journal of American Medical Association* (2003). 290:2959-2967. *Evidence-Based Gastroenterology* (2004). 5(3): 86-87.

Kieff, B., Eckert, G.J., Thomas Imperiale. (2004). Is there an association between diverticulitis and colonic neoplasia? A colonoscopic study. *American Journal of Gastroenterology*, 99:2007-2011.

Kahl, C.J., Thomas Imperiale. (2004). Do aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents cause a false positive fecal blood test? *American Journal of Medicine*, 117:837-41.

Thomas Imperiale, Ransohoff, D.F., Itzkowitz, S.H., Turnbull, B.A., Ross, M.E. (2004). Comparison of a stool DNA panel with hemoccult II for noninvasive screening for colorectal neoplasia in an average risk population. 351:2704 -2714.

Thomas Imperiale. (2005). Can computed tomographic colonography become a "good" screening test? *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 142: 669-70.

Lynn Soban, Elizabeth Yano. The impact of primary care resource sufficiency on prevention performance. (2005). *Journal of Ambulatory Care Management*, 28(3):231-243.

Implementation Research Coordinator Hired!

Adam Powell, PhD, was recently hired as the Implementation Research Coordinator and will begin working with the CRC QUERI on August 8, 2005.

Dr. Powell received his PhD in Social Psychology from the University of Kansas and has conducted extensive evaluation research with healthcare systems and non-profit organizations. He has also been involved in marketing research.

Look for more information about Dr. Powell in the October issue of the Affiliates Forum.

Clinician Letter Series Slated to Begin

In August, the CRC QUERI will initiate the Clinician Letter Series; a series of letters emailed quarterly to QUERI clinicians that pertain to clinical issues.

Our wish is that the Letter Series will be timely and pertinent. Therefore, we need your suggestions as to topics of interest. As always, send your input to our Administrative Officer, Suzanne Leger, at Suzanne.Leger2@med.va.gov (612) 467-2785 or contact Laura Kochevar at Laura.Kochevar@med.va.gov.

Get to Know Our Affiliates *Deborah Fisher, MD*

Deborah Fisher, MD, MHS is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Duke University School of Medicine, and is a Research Associate at the Center for Health Services Research in Primary Care at the Durham VA Medical Center where she is also a clinical gastroenterologist. Prior to her current appointment, Dr. Fisher was a fellow in the Division of Gastroenterology at Duke University Medical Center for three years, during which she completed a two year Health Services Research and Development fellowship at the Durham VA Medical Center.

Dr. Fisher is currently conducting a cross-sectional questionnaire study with comparison to medical record review ("Colorectal Cancer Screening in a VA Population") that aims to validate a self-report colorectal cancer screening instrument, the Colorectal Cancer Screening Behavior Questionnaire (CRCSBQ). The instrument, which is designed to detect current colorectal cancer screening participation, was originally developed by the National Cancer Institute work group. The clinically relevant endpoints are whether patients have ever been screened and are current with screening for colorectal cancer via one of the four standard colorectal cancer screening modalities: barium enema, flexible sigmoidoscopy, FOBT, and/or colonoscopy.

Participating patients are black and white males and females who are 50 years of age or older and are enrolled in primary care at the Durham VA or the Minneapolis VA. In part one of the study, a number of patients will complete cognitive interviews about the CRCSB, with the total number of patients dependent upon the number of iterations of cognitive interviews needed. In part two of the study, the CRCSBQ and a demographics questionnaire are being administered to 200 (total) veterans at the two sites. Also, medical record data will be abstracted from the VA electronic medical record, non-VA medical records, and Medicare claims data. CRCSBQ responses will be compared to medical record data. Point estimates and 95% confidence intervals will be calculated for the concordance, relative sensitivity, specificity and report-to-records ratio of the CRCSBQ to detect current colorectal cancer screening status compared to medical record review.



The CRCS Behavior Questionnaire has the potential to enhance screening research as to secular trends in colorectal cancer behaviors, to identify barriers and facilitators to screening, to detect at-risk populations within the VA and to serve as an outcome for interventional studies that will improve adherence to colorectal cancer screening guidelines. The questionnaire will also provide survey researchers with the ability to gather data without accessing patient medical records. The long-term goal of the study is to contribute to the development

of a resource of cancer screening measures with known reliability and validity across multiple settings and populations.

Dr. Fisher noted that her affiliation with the CRC QUERI has been very helpful for this project in providing data support as well as in securing Medicare data. Similarly, she indicated that her collaboration with the CRC QUERI has provided her an "amazing opportunity" to work with various investigators who share her research interests and who provide feedback and support.

Upcoming Research Seminars

Be sure to mark your calendars!

August 23, 2005: Lynn Soban, PhD, "The Effect of Area HMO Market Share on Colorectal Cancer Screening Within the VA Health Care System" 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM EDT

November 2005: Laura Kochevar, PhD, and Dawn Provenza, MD, "Update on Colorectal Cancer Care Collaborative (C4)"

February 2006: Michael Pignone, MD, "CRC Screening Decision Aids"

Let Us Hear From You!

If you would like to share your news with your QUERI colleagues, please call or email Administrative Officer, Suzanne Leger at (612) 467-2785 Suzanne.Leger2@med.va.gov

We'd love to hear what you're doing!

